1	2	3	4
Gauge Conversion			
1. Rupsa-Bangripusi	00.50	End of IX Plan	The work would be taken up after obtaining the clearance from CCEA.
Doublings			
1. Gajpatinagaran-Vijayanagras	5.90	Dec.'97	Work in progress.
2. Rajatgarh-Nergundi	5.16	Dec.'97	Work in progress.
3. Raghunathpur-Rahama patch doubling	8.00	Dec.'99	Land acquisition in progress. Tenders for work invited.
Electrification			
1. Kharagpur-Bhubaneswar	10.00 and Rs. 30 crs. under BOLT	March, 2000	Electrification work of Kharagpur-Bhubaneshwar section has been approved with private funding. The work has not been physically taken in hand so far because of very high prices quoted by the bidders in the Tender under BOLT scheme. Planning Commission was approached to allow execution of the work under conventional system with Budgetary support. Planning Commission have now desired that approval of Expanded Board be obtained, for executing the work under Railway funding. Accordingly, the proposal is being submitted before the Expanded Board.

(d) to (f). There is no proposal to electrify Raipur-Waltair section, at present.

[Translation]

Branch Post Office in U.P.

381. SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the names of such villages in Uttar Pradesh particularly in Khurja, which fulfil the stipulated conditions for opening Branch Post Offices and the Post Offices have still not been opened there;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the branches of post offices are likely to be opened there?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) 2894 villages in Uttar Pradesh fulfil the part of norms opening of post office relating to population and distance only. The financial norm for opening post offices is examined depending upon the availability of targets and resources. Extra departmental Branch Post Offices have been sanctioned in the current financial year in 32 villages fulfilling all the norms relating to distance, population and income. No village in Khurja fulfils the stipulated conditions of opening of Post Office.

(b) and (c). Post Offices are opened progressively under Annual Plan Schemes subjects to fulfilment of Departmental norms and availability of resources.

[English]

Policy on Satellite

382. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any policy on satellite communication has been formulated;

(b) if so, the salient features and details of such a policy; and

(c) if not, the time by which such policy is likely to be formulated?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b). The policy on satellite communication in India is being evolved.

(c) The policy is likely to be formulated during the year 1997.

Post and Telegraph/Telecommunication System in Gujarat

383. SHRI GORDHANBHAI JAVIA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there was any proposal made by the Gujarat Government for the development of Post and Telegraph and Telecommunication system during the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b). Two proposals for opening of Post Offices at Dediyasan Industrial Estate, Mehsana District and Udyog Bhawan, Gandhinagar were received from Gujarat State Government. No proposal has been received from Gujarat Government for the development of Telegraph service or for the development of Telecommunication System during the last two years.

(c) Opening of Post at Dediyasan Industrial Estate, Mehsana Distt. and Udyog Bhawan, Gandhinagar has not been found justified on the basis of norms for opening of Post Offices.

Department of Telecom. under its programme of modernisation of Telegraph Service has been taken up the following developmental schemes during the last two years :

1. Store and Forward Message Switching System (SFMSS)-66 lines was upgraded to 128-Lines system in September, 1994 at Central Telegraph Office, Ahmedabad.
2. SEMSS-32L system was installed in October, 1994 at CTO Rajkot.
3. Electronic Key Board Concentrators (EKBCs) are working at Ahmedabad (2 Nos.) Rajkot, Bhavnagar, Surat, Baroda, Bharuch, Anand, Godhra and Jamnagar CTOs.
4. 8 EKBCs and 72 EKBs are under installation.

Extension of Asansol Telephones

384. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to bring Adra and Purulia under Asansol Telephones to enable people to get access of local dialing facilities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of part (a).

(c) Adra is a short distance charging area (SDCA) forming part of Purulia long distance charging area (LDCA). Purulia and Asansol are two different LDCAs situated approx. 60 kms apart. Local dialling is not admissible between two different LDCAs under the existing policy.

Indians Ferried by AI and IA from UAE

385. SHRI E. AHAMED : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Indians ferried by Air India and Indian Airlines from United Arab Emirate (UAE) recently in the wake of amnesty declared by UAE Government which resulted in exodus of Indians;

(b) the number of Indians stranded in UAE even after the expiry of amnesty period; and

(c) the steps taken to bring them back to India?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) Air India and Indian Airlines carried 37430 and 4626 passengers respectively under the amnesty scheme.

(b) and (c). There has been no demand for ferrying Indians from UAE under the amnesty scheme after the expiry of the deadline.

[Translation]

Drinking Water Facility to Passengers

386. SHRI HANSRAJ AHIR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways supply drinking water only for First Class AC and Second Class AC categories of passengers in the trains;

(b) if so, the reasons for not making the provision to provide drinking water facility to Second class passengers who travel in large number;

(c) whether the Government propose to install water taps at many places on Platforms; and

(d) if so, the time by which an early action is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (d). Drinking water arrangements have been provided to First AC and AC 2-Tier passengers. Coach Attendants of First Class coaches carry water for supply to passengers. In addition, instructions also exist for provision of jerry cans in sleeper coaches of long distance trains. As the second class ordinary coaches are not manned and there is continuous ingress and egress of the passengers, adequate drinking water